

# THE ALMA RECORD.

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ALMA, MICHIGAN, THURSDAY AFTERNOON, SEPTEMBER 6, 1917

WHOLE NUMBER 2007

## YOUNG ALMA GIRL KILLED TUESDAY

Beatrice Epler Brutally Murdered At Night Within Sight Of Her Home

## NO TRACE OF MURDERER

Victim Was Strangled, And Torn Clothes Indicate Brave Fight That She Made

One of the most shocking crimes in the history of Alma was revealed, shortly before five o'clock yesterday morning, when day was just breaking, Charles Hooper, at that time finding the body of Beatrice Epler, aged seventeen, in a clump of bushes, near a pasture gate on Grover avenue. Dark streaks around the girl's neck, showed most plainly that she had been a victim of foul play, having been choked to death several hours before.

Every effort so far to locate her murderer has simply brought the officers up against a blind wall. Suspicious characters were quickly rounded up by Sheriff Bradford, who had been called from Ithaca, and Officer Campbell, but their stories were such that the officers did not feel that anything was to be gained by holding them. Two were questioned Wednesday morning, one a colored man and the other a former resident of this city, who chanced to be here.

It seems that Tuesday evening about six o'clock the young girl called up her parents, Mr. and Mrs. S. H. Epler, who live on a small farm out Grover avenue, and informed them that she would be home soon. A short time later she was seen by various people headed towards Grover avenue, out East Superior street. About seven o'clock it is reported, that she was seen coming back towards the city, but during the meantime she had not been home. This was the last that was seen of her until about 10:30 p. m., when Claude Struble, coming from a fireman's meeting at the city hall, saw her talking with a young man on a corner across from the hall.

Struble did not take particular notice of the couple and is unable to give a good description of the man who was with her and the officers have not yet been able to find out who it was. So far as the officers have been able to ascertain, Mr. Struble was the last person, and for that matter the only person, who saw her, with the man, who probably is now a murderer.

The body was discovered shortly before five o'clock by Charles Hooper as he was going down Grover avenue from the farm home of the Hoopers to a pasture, where he intended to drive some horses and cows back to the barn. He opened the gate and let out the horses and started across the field for the cows. Happening to look around at the horses, he saw a white object in a clump of bushes by the fence. At first he thought it was a piece of paper, and then impulse made him go over to look at it. He was greatly shocked to find that it was a human body, the body of a neighbor.

He went back to the house and Mr. Hooper immediately sent after Night-watch Vibber and a doctor, and brought both back.

In the mean time Mr. Epler had started down the road, and just as Mr. Hooper returned with the doctor and nightwatch, he discovered the body of his daughter, lying in the bushes, where a fiend had left it, probably shortly before midnight.

There was every indication that the girl had put up a terrific battle with her assailant. Her clothes were badly torn, both shoes were off, and lying near the road, a number of feet from the bushes where the body was found.

Scattered nearby were portions of torn letters, but whether or not they had a bearing on the case was not known at noon today. The letters were torn in small bits, which were carefully gathered up by Sheriff Bradford who is endeavoring to fit the pieces together and find out their contents. A letter to Mr. Epler, containing a check for fifty-one dollars, obtained at the post office Tuesday evening by the girl, was also found nearby.

The officers are making every endeavor to solve the mystery, which seems almost devoid of clues. A few parties, who have been hangers around in Alma for sometime past, are being given a most careful going over by the officers. Several little things have made suspicion point at various young men, notably the two whom the officers gave a taste of the third degree Wednesday morning.

Mr. and Mrs. S. H. Epler are hard hit by the untimely death of their daughter at the hands of a fiendish murderer. Mrs. Epler in particular is almost distracted by the crime, and the loss of her daughter.

The inquest called to meet today was started immediately after dinner. Charles Hooper was the first called after the inquest opened, and then Mr. Epler was called. From the early indications it may be shown that the girl did not meet her death at this point, but in an automobile and that she was left at this point near her home. Inquest not finished at time of going to press.

## RESIGNED

City Marshal Rogers Resignation Was Accepted by Council

On Tuesday evening of this week City Marshal William Rogers, who has also been city street and weed commissioner, handed in his resignation to the city council, to take immediate effect and the council immediately accepted it.

Mr. Rogers in resigning the office gave as his reasons that his health was not of the best and that the two offices combined made more work than one man could properly take care of.

The mayor immediately appointed Harry Voller as street and weed commissioner and the appointment was confirmed by the city council. It is understood that James Campbell, recently made a special officer, will act as city marshal for the present.

## GRATIOT COUNTY'S MEN ARE LEAVING

Drafted Men Leaving For The Training Camp—Board Grants Industrial Exemptions

The men of Gratiot who have been drafted are now leaving for the training cantonment at Battle Creek, where they will start on the month of training that will bring them forth as well trained units of the National Army, which is to do battle with the armies of Germany, if peace is not soon made.

A change in orders is sending one percent of the total number of men from the county each day for five days, instead of the five percent for five days as had been at one time planned. The reason for this is probably because the training camps are still far more ready to accommodate the thousands of men who are to go from the various counties of the state.

Under the change Gratiot county is sending three men a day, except the fourth day, Saturday, when five men, or two percent, will leave for the training camp. The first one percent, left Alma yesterday morning, and the second one percent left for Battle Creek this morning.

Following is the list of men and the dates on which the first five percent will go, together with the alternates chosen:

Wednesday, September 5th, William C. Searl of Ithaca, Aubrey Melinger of Ithaca and William Fields of St. Louis. Alternate, Hiram Ford of Alma.

Thursday, September 6th, Michael Huley of Ithaca, Russell Bradford of Wheeler, Walter Brown of Ithaca. Alternate, Lyman Dale of Alma.

Friday, September 7th, Roland Mayes of Alma, Dallas Brock of Alma, Glen Ciffin of Ithaca. Alternate, Raymond Lake of Alma.

Saturday, September 8th, Roy Collison of Wheeler, William Meredith of Pompano, Clyde Galland of St. Louis, Robert Oliver of Wheeler, Alfred Rhodes of Alma. Alternates, DeWight Von Thurn of Alma and Raymond Peterson of Alma.

Other men will be called later in the month, probably on the 19th. A portion will not be called until the first few days in October.

The following list of exemptions has been made for industrial reasons by the district appeal board, and these drafted men are now released from service:

Arthur G. Crooks, Milton S. Kenyon, Edwin H. Baker, William Busington, Roy G. Hixon, H. F. Mouser, Rupert Ferguson, Clifton Ferguson, Robert Sawyer, Lucil Walens, Leslie Kuhlman, Ellis Coburn, James A. Wise, Charles Brown, Orley Chaffin, Wesley Chaffin, Carl L. Fisher, Eli H. Andrews, Clarence P. Richardson, Gus Hummel, Harley Hoffer, Charles Cavell, Edward Miller, Ben Collison, Claude E. Whitford, Robert Keller.

## GREAT CROWD

Several Thousand People Saw The Aeroplane Here

The largest crowd that has been in Alma this year was in the city Sunday to witness the aeroplane flight of "Billy" Brock, known as "The Ace of the Air." It has been estimated that at least 7,000 people saw Brock Sunday and a great many more were in Alma for the flights given Monday.

The sub-division known as Central Heights and the one adjoining, known as Southview sub-division, were dotted thickly Sunday with automobiles, many of which came for over fifty miles to see the event, the biggest in Alma this year.

Brock made a splendid flight on Sunday and on Monday made two more, which were still better than those of Sunday, "The Ace of the Air" pulling off stunts Monday that he did not even attempt Sunday. The great crowd that witnessed his performances was highly pleased.

One man who was present Sunday claimed that he counted twenty-seven hundred automobiles on the grounds of the flight, but this seems to be somewhat high. It is certain, however, that over 5,000 people were present Sunday and that as many more saw the flights of Monday morning and afternoon.

The occasion was the opening sale of lots in Central Heights addition and it is said that the sale both days was good.

## THE DRAFTED MEN WERE BANQUETED

Banquet Was Given To Gratiot's Quota In The High School Tuesday Noon

## SPLENDID SPEECHES GIVEN

Veterans Of The Civil War Were Present At The Affair As Guests Of Honor.

The Red Cross and the business men of Alma joined hand in hand in giving the drafted men of Gratiot county a fine farewell banquet before they started leaving yesterday for the training cantonment at Battle Creek, to begin training towards making an army that will make the United States and her allies victorious in the greatest war of world history.

The banquet was held in the gymnasium of the Alma high school Tuesday, and with drafted men, members of the G. A. R., who so nobly upheld the cause of the union in the days of '61, and many members of the Red Cross present, it was an affair that will never be forgotten by those fortunate enough to be present.

The banquet had one serious drawback. It was given for the men who had been certified for service up to September 4th, and was announced in all of the papers of the county last week. The certified list of men was not ready until Monday night, September 3rd, so that it was impossible to send personal invitations to each. Only about thirty of the young men who have been drafted were present.

Following a chicken dinner at which everyone had more than their fill, Dr. Harry Means Crooks, president of Alma college, in the capacity of toastmaster, called attention to the fact that the United States was sending out these young men to make the world safe for democracy, and then paid a glowing tribute to the men of '61 to '65, who saved democracy in this country. He called upon Dr. Carney of the draft board for a few words.

Dr. T. J. Carney, who has done most faithful work with the draft board with which he has been the assistant examiner, told his audience that 850 of Gratiot's young men had been examined, and about twenty-five from other places, who had been permitted to be examined here. He then paid a tribute to the manhood of Gratiot announcing that only eight per cent of the young men examined were physically unfit for army service, indicative of the fact that the men of Gratiot county are ranking higher physically than in most other places in the country. He told the young men that the hearts of those at home were with them in their work.

Mrs. Frances Burns of St. Louis, the next speaker, said that no one gave more than did the mothers that the young men leave behind. She asked the young men to remember that, and asked them to aid in upholding the great principles of the country.

Marcus Pollasky, who has the history of the county at his instant command, made a glowing address. He started by telling these young men that the county had been named for a fighter, General Gratiot, and then told these young men that they, with the rest of the million young Americans called, were called to bear the burdens of the world in its great war against autocracy. He told of the patience of this country during the three years before war was declared, and then paid a great tribute to the veterans of the Civil war. He turned slightly and started to pay a tribute to these young men Gratiot is sending out. He started with voice choking with emotion. His voice broke. His emotions overpowered him, and he could not finish his fine address.

Mr. Halstead, owner of the State Journal of Lansing, who was present, was called by Toastmaster Crooks. He had little to say, but that little was right to the point. "Every man back of the President."

Rev. J. Frank Jackson, the next speaker, said, "Let the Kaiser and democracy grapple. Right cannot fail. He told of letters from the trenches, which told of things that indicated that Germans were losing their nerve. He said that he had watched these young men being examined, and that he had seen nearly every type of soldier in Europe, but that there would be no better soldiers than the American type, who were going out to save the world from a great evil. He asked the young men to keep clean in thought, in word and in deed, to remember that they are Americans.

President Crooks of Alma college closed the program. He stated that the war was not of our making, but that it was the aim of an enemy against us. He said that we were not pulling chestnuts from the fire for England, but that England had pulled bushels of chestnuts from the fire for us during the past two years. It is America's war he said, and we ask nothing except to live our own lives. America had the cleanest

hands of all, excepting possibly Belgium, he stated, and then continued and said that democracy in the world depended upon America, that Russia, China, etc., were looking to this country for guidance. He said that the United States had done great things for good, that there had been a few small things that might better not have been done, but that there are no stains on our uniforms. In closing he said that this was a great country with a great record, and turning to the young men he said that the service is greater than ourselves, and the victory must be theirs.

The work of the ladies, who aided at the school with their labor, and those who so generously donated eatables for the banquet, is highly appreciated by those who had charge of the affair. It could not have been anything like the success that it was, had it not been for them.

## TO MOVE SOON

The Alma post office will be moved from its present location to the new Marshall Dallas block about the first of October, it is now expected. There is still considerable work to be done on the new building before it will be ready for the post office, and it is expected that it will take the greater part of this month to get the place in readiness.

## PROMINENT SHIAWASSEE PIONEER IS DEAD

C. D. Searl, Father of Circuit Judge Searl, And Pioneer Of Shiawassee County

Chauncey Deming Searl was born December 10th, 1831, in Brooklyn (now Cleveland) Cuyahoga county, O., and passed away at his home in Fairview, Shiawassee county, Michigan, Friday morning, August 31st, 1917, at the age of 85 years, 8 months and 21 days.

He first came to Michigan in May, 1855 and purchased the farm where he has lived to the present time. The following year he returned to Ohio and was united in marriage to Miss Harriett E. Kelly at Strongsville, Cuyahoga Co., Ohio, April 23rd, 1856 and in May of the same year he brought his bride to Fairview, Michigan. He then erected a comfortable log dwelling and March 10th, 1857 they moved into their new home, where together they braved the hardships of pioneer life. Three children came to bless them—Frank C. Searl of Ashley, Judge Kelly S. Searl of Ithaca, and Mrs. Anna M. Hayley of Bay City, all of whom are living.

His wife preceded him to the better home October 6th, 1890. He was married to Mrs. Corintha C. West of Chicago, Ill., Dec 13th, 1892, who still survives him.

The funeral services were held Sunday, Sept. 2, at the residence, on the lawn under the trees planted by Mr. Searl fifty years ago, under the auspices of Maple River (Elsie) Lodge No. 74. The attendance was very large, 14 O. O. F. representatives being present from Ashley, Bannister, Ovid, Burton, Oquoss, Corunna and Ithaca. The universal esteem in which Mr. Searl was held was shown by the fact that the procession of autos following his remains to the grave in Elsie cemetery was over a mile long. The services were conducted by Rev. Geo. Varion of Elsie, a retired M. E. minister and an Odd Fellow.

## COLLEGE PROSPECTS

Coach Helmer Has Bunch of Good Veterans Back

In less than two weeks Coach Harry Helmer of Alma college will have his football candidates working out on Davis field, and with a fine bunch of veterans back this year, it is expected that the Maroon and Cream Meteor will turn out a fine team.

Not only will Coach Helmer have a fine lot of old men back, but from every indication there will be a few new men who have been starring in state high school football during the past two or three years, and from these Helmer should be able to find enough more men to build up a crack eleven, with which to carry through the long and hard schedule which has been arranged.

Nearly all of the old men who will be back in college are linemen. These include Captain French, Spooner, Lott, Barabeno, Richards, Miller and A. Foote. The backfield men who will be back are Smith and Herbert.

## W. C. T. U.

Here is a pointed paragraph taken from "The American Issue" that should make us good citizens think twice about. Sometime next year we are going to say: "If our army only had 10 per cent. more shells; 10 per cent. more aeroplanes; if we only had 10 per cent. more ships and 10 per cent. more food, we would be near victory. And that 10 per cent. will be repaying in the cash register of the saloons, unless we act now. It will be too late then."

Local school children to see French children at work during war times. Matinee of "Mothers of France" will be of tremendous educational value to children. Genesta theatre Saturday and Sunday, September 15 and 16.—Adv.

## PUBLIC SCHOOLS OPENED TUESDAY

Enrollment For First Day Shows Most Remarkable Increase For A Single Year

## IS NEARLY THIRTY PER CENT

Rooms Are All Crowded To Capacity And Half Day Sessions Will Be Held In One Room

The Alma public schools opened on Tuesday with the largest enrollment ever shown at the end of the opening day, and there is every prospect of a healthy increase in the large number now enrolled. The number enrolled at the end of the first day, Tuesday, was 1193.

The enrollment figures for the first day this year show an increase of nearly thirty per cent greater than last year, when the end of the first day of school saw 934 students enrolled in all the grades.

The primary building this year has five hundred and thirty-nine enrolled as against 359 last year and the intermediate building has four hundred and twenty enrolled as against three hundred and fifty-six last year. The high school also shows a fine increase, there being 243 this year as against 219 last year.

Some of the rooms in the three schools are crowded to capacity and the third grade B is overcrowded to such an extent that for the time being half day sessions must be held in this one room. It is planned to give the youngsters almost an entire school day in the half day. A portion will start school at eight o'clock and get out at twelve o'clock, and the rest will start at 12:30 with a half day session and will probably continue in school until 4 p. m. Merrill Stuckey will assist in the teaching in this grade for the present.

This condition must be met in this way until the new school in Hillcrest sub-division is completed and ready for use, when a number will be transferred to this new school.

Superintendent Schultz, seen yesterday, expressed himself as believing that there was quite a large number of students who have not yet entered the attendance, and make the problem still a greater one.

Conditions have become so bad that it has been decided not to allow youngsters under five to enter the kindergarten, unless they are five during the month of September. Superintendent Schultz said that there were a number living near the college who could send their children to the college kindergarten for their earliest training, and in this way aid in relieving the situation in the public schools. He called attention to the fact that credit was allowed from there and that the K. G. girls at the college took the youngsters home also.

## GRATIFYING RECORD

Since June 6 There Have Been Busy Times At Office

Until the cyclone swept across Michigan on June 6, the officials of the Windstorm Co. had had no idea of leaving an assessment this year, as they had a good sized cash balance on hand. That storm not only melted this surplus like frost disappears on a sunny morning, but the losses soon mounted to figures that required an assessment. So on June 20th the directors of the company met here and ordered an assessment of 20 cents on the \$100. Since June 6, the company has booked \$12,000,000 of new insurance. After the assessment was ordered, Secretary Rogers had to prepare notices to each of the 65,000 policy-holders of the company, with return envelope enclosed. Meantime, too, the volume of correspondence had increased to unheard of proportions.

Secretary Rogers, upon whom rested the responsibility of caring for this deluge of business, showed that he was equal to the requirements. On August 3, the last of the 65,000 notices of assessment were mailed to policy holders; the policies for the \$12,000,000 of new insurance have been written and mailed to their owners; the correspondence has been promptly answered. All this volume of business has been cared for by the secretary and his assistants, making a record that must be very gratifying to that official and to the company. And it has all been done with that absence of fussiness which shows a smooth-running organization.—From Hastings Banner, Aug. 16, 1917. Adv.

All mothers' clubs of city should see vital "Mothers of France." Genesta theatre will show film conveying message from mothers of France to mothers of America Saturday and Sunday, September 15 and 16.—Adv.

## HOLDUP ATTEMPTED

John Beard Yelled And Frightened Two Men Away

While going home last night, driving his horse, John Beard, 907 Ely street, was held up by two men, one of them a white man and one a colored man, but by yelling he managed to frighten the robbers away.

The affair took place near the scene of Tuesday night's murder, according to reports. Beard was driving along the road when the two men jumped from the side of the road and grabbed at the horse. The horse stopped suddenly, and Mr. Beard was thrown to the ground. At the same time he yelled at the top of his voice and residents were attracted and the robbers frightened away.

Mr. Beard received a badly injured knee from his fall, which needed medical treatment.

## LOCAL COMPANY IS BUILDING ELEVATOR

Alma Elevator Company Is Constructing Large Grain Elevator For Their Business

The Alma Elevator company, located on South Woodworth avenue, is now building a large addition to its plant here. The new addition is to be an elevator which will have a 30,000 bushel capacity, and allow this growing concern to go into the grain business to a greater extent than ever before.

"It is the intention of this concern," said Manager Watkins, "to purchase all kinds of grain, and also to grind feed for the trade. The company feels that there is a fine opportunity here for this business and intends to go out after all that it can get."

The elevator which is being constructed will be 24x26 feet and 65 feet high. It has a full basement, about ten feet in height, which will be used for the storing of potatoes and such other vegetables as may be purchased by the company. The base of the elevator is constructed of reinforced concrete, and the walls of the basement are 16 inches thick, making a foundation strong enough to support any weight that may be put upon it.

The elevator is being constructed of massive timbers throughout. The sides are being constructed of 2x6 timbers, in such a way as to give a six inch wall the entire height of the elevator. Wagon dumps are also being built for the elevator.

The company also expects to construct about seventy-five feet more of coal sheds before winter sets in, giving room for the storage of many more tons of coal.

## EIGHTEEN OUT

Coach Kimball Has Small Bunch Out For High School Team

Coach M. R. Kimball of the Alma high school football team is rather disappointed over the small number of men which has so far turned out for the team, and cannot see where the locals will have a winner, unless more men get out. At present only about eighteen men have shown up for the nightly workouts.

The number of old men to report is smaller than was expected which also gives Coach Kimball hopes a black eye. Walker, veteran half back will not be in school until the middle of October, and Mahr, line-man, will not be back in school this year. Herseherberger has not turned out yet, and it may be that this scapable veteran will not be able to do a suit this year, which leaves the orange and black with only five men to start with.

The number of new men to turn out is the biggest disappointment to Kimball, who expected that about twenty-five new men would be out, and instead only about half that number have shown up. With only eighteen men out he will not even have enough for two teams in order to get good scrimmage practice.

What would you do if you only had 15 days to live—see "The Fatal Ring" telechurn soon.—Adv.

## ELECTION SAW A GREAT LANDSLIDE

Voters Of City Greatly In Favor Of Bonding The City For \$126,000 For Improvements

## ALSO FRANCHISE EXTENSION

Three Bonding Issues Carried By Votes Of About Ten To One—Light Vote Was Cast

At the special election held here Friday the citizens of Alma again demonstrated that they were after municipal improvements, which would work for the betterment of the city and carried the three bonding issues by votes of about ten to one. The proposition to extend the franchise for an electric road, now held by Marcus Pollasky, for a period of ten full years, was also given a fine vote, the proposition getting better than a four to one vote.

Only a very light vote was cast by the voters of the city, but from the way the ballots went there seems to be absolutely no question as to what the citizens of Alma want. The three bonding propositions were given as near a unanimous vote as could be possible with any such proposed improvements.

The proposition to bond the city for \$75,000 for watermain extensions was given a majority of 259, the proposition to bond for \$40,000 for sewer main extensions was given a majority of 271 votes, and the proposition to bond for \$10,000 was given a majority of 261 votes. The question of granting the ten year extension to the electric line franchise held by Marcus Pollasky, making it run for a full thirty years was given a majority of 183 votes.

Question	Yes	No	Maj.
\$75,000 Water Bonds	136	11	125
\$40,000 Sewer Bonds	135	9	127
\$10,000 Paving Bonds	134	12	124
Franchise Extension	110	37	73

Question	Yes	No	Maj.
\$75,000 Water Bonds	68	8	60
\$40,000 Sewer Bonds	72	2	70
\$10,000 Paving Bonds	65	7	58
Franchise Extension	65	10	55

Question	Yes	No	Maj.
\$75,000 Water Bonds	35	2	33
\$40,000 Sewer Bonds	33	4	29
\$10,000 Paving Bonds	35	3	32
Franchise Extension	29	8	21

Question	Yes	No	Maj.
\$75,000 Water Bonds	49	8	41
\$40,000 Sewer Bonds	51	6	45
\$10,000 Paving Bonds	53	5	48
Franchise Extension	47	11	37

The matter of these improvements was taken up at the council meeting Tuesday night, and the council decided to do everything possible to rush the work, get the bonds sold and do some of the work this fall, if possible.

It is the intention of the council to get the paving propositions under way first, as a couple of the streets, which are to be paved are in very bad condition and might have to be closed, if the paving cannot be done until spring. This is particularly true of Michigan avenue east of the Republic Motor Truck Company's main plant. The council also hopes to get part of the work done with the water main extensions, before winter sets in, if possible, but there is little expectation of getting work done on the sewer extensions before next spring, owing to the amount of preliminary work which the special assessors will have on their hands.

## TAX NOTICE

I will be at the city hall to receive taxes from September 1st to September 15th, inclusive. If you have bought or sold this year, better see if the taxes are paid.

G. V. Wright.

You will find the best bread in Butter-cup wrappers. 07-11-c.



GRATIOT COUNTY'S DRAFTED MEN

The above cut shows the boys of Gratiot county who are being sent to the training cantonment at Battle Creek this week. Included in the twelve are DeWight Von Thurn, Raymond Lake, Dallas Brock, Roland Mayes and Alfred Rhodes of Alma.